



Farm Labor

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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HIRED FARM EMPLOYMENT RISES MORE THAN USUAL IN JANUARY

Greater than usual increases in hired farm employment during January raised total employment on February 1 about 1 percent over that on January 1, despite a slight decline in family employment, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported today. Hired workers on February 1 totaled 1,424,000 persons, 8 percent more than a month earlier, but 5 percent less than a year earlier. Family employment totaled 6,375,000, about 3 percent less than a year earlier. All persons employed on farms totaled 7,799,000, compared with 7,732,000 a month earlier and 8,051,000 a year earlier.

In the week prior to February 1 weather conditions were generally unfavorable for outside work. On January 25 the lowest temperatures of the season were experienced in many sections east of the Rocky Mountains, with freezing weather extending as far south as the Rio Grande Valley and Florida. Temperatures were below normal for the week from the Rio Grande Valley north-eastward to Lake Erie -- as much as 6 degrees below normal in the southern Ohio Valley, Tennessee, Alabama and extreme Southern Texas. Temperatures west of this area were generally above normal. Precipitation for the week ended January 29 was half an inch or less in all regions, except in most of New England, the coastal regions of the South Atlantic States and the Northern Pacific Coast.

Hired farm employment on February 1 was larger than a month earlier in all regions except New England and the Far West. The greatest gains occurred in the West Central and South Atlantic States, where the number of hired workers increased 12 to 17 percent. Contributing to the increase in the West North Central States was the renewed field activity in southeast Missouri, where nearly a fifth of the cotton was yet to be picked. The increase in the South Atlantic States was general over the entire region. In the West South Central States, the number of hired workers increased during January, but the increase was smaller than in January 1945. Hired employment on February 1 was generally less than a year earlier, except for slight increases in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East South Central States.

Family employment was slightly less on February 1 than a month earlier in the Corn Belt and the Southeast, although the changes everywhere were small. All regions showed decreases from a year earlier, except

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the Pacific Coast States which had a slight increase. The East South Central region with a 7 percent decrease and the Mountain with a 6 percent decrease, were the only regions where declines exceeded 5 percent.

Farm work in the Northeast was generally limited around February 1 to indoor work. Chores and livestock care were about the only jobs being done in many areas. Cutting and storing ice were underway, but woods work was hindered in some areas by heavy snow cover. In northern Maine, sorting and shipping potatoes was one of the major farm jobs. Farm employment on February 1 in the New England States totaled 203,000 persons, including 154,000 family workers and 49,000 hired workers. In the Middle Atlantic States, employment of 358,000 family workers and 124,000 hired workers accounted for a total farm employment of 482,000 persons.

In the East North Central States, farm employment on February 1 totaled 1,170,000 persons, slightly less than a month earlier or a year earlier. The number of family workers was about 2 percent less than on January 1 and the number of hired workers was 5 percent larger than on that date. There were fewer family workers and hired hands on February 1 this year than last. In the West North Central States farm employment increased to 1,297,000 workers from January 1 to February 1. Family workers numbered about the same at the beginning of January as at the end, but the number of hired hands increased by 22,000 to a total of 155,000 persons by February 1. Hired employment in all States was the same as or higher than on January 1 with the largest increase occurring in Missouri, where cotton picking was still in progress. As in the East North Central States, both family and hired employment on February 1 were smaller than on February 1, 1945. Outside work was at a minimum, with chores and maintenance jobs of major importance. Some corn was still not husked and this furnished work when weather permitted.

Cool wet weather was unfavorable for soil preparation and planting truck crops in Atlantic Coast States from the Carolinas southward. Cabbage and lettuce transplanting was continued in Carolina, and potato planting in Florida was proceeding after some delay. Citrus and truck crop harvesting continued in Florida. In the week ended February 2, about 1,500 cars of vegetables were shipped out of Florida, compared with about 1,600 cars for the comparable week a year earlier. Carlot shipments of citrus fruit for the week totaled about 2,650 cars, or 200 cars more than in the same week of 1945. In the northern States of the region, weather conditions permitted little work except chores and odd jobs. Farm employment in the South Atlantic States on February 1 totaled 1,417,000 workers, about the same as on January 1. The number of family workers was 37,000 smaller than on January 1, but the number of hired workers was 44,000 larger than on that date. Total farm employment in this region was less than a year earlier.

In the East South Central States farm employment totaled 1,166,000 persons on February 1, a decline of 11,000 from the total of a month earlier. An increase of 8 percent over January 1 in the number of hired workers was not sufficient to counterbalance the 2 percent decrease in the number of family

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workers. The decrease in employment from a year ago was larger in this region than in any other, but was entirely owing to a decrease in the number of family workers. Unfavorable weather hindered or halted field work. Tennessee and the Delta region of Mississippi still had a considerable amount of cotton picking to complete. In Mississippi, a smaller proportion of the cabbage crop had been set on February 1 than is usual for this date. Work on preparing tobacco beds was starting in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Increases in employment of both hired and family workers in the West South Central States during January raised total farm employment to 1,275,000 persons on February 1, an increase of 6 percent over January 1. However, the number of persons working was still less than a year earlier. Nearly a fourth of the cotton crop remained to be picked in Arkansas, but weather permitted little field work. In Oklahoma, weather conditions permitted some plowing and harvesting of the small amount of corn and cotton still in fields. In Texas, carlot shipments of citrus fruits and vegetables for the week ended February 2 were greater than for the same week in 1945. Shipments of vegetables, at around 1,300 cars, were nearly 200 cars greater than a year earlier, while shipments of citrus increased to 1,300 cars from last year's total of 900 cars for this week.

In the Mountain States, little field work was being done around February 1, except in Arizona. Arizona shipped over 800 cars of vegetables and somewhat less than 100 cars of citrus during the week ended February 2. There was also some cotton being picked in Arizona. Farm employment in all of the Mountain States totaled 326,000 persons, slightly more than a month earlier, but 6 percent less than on February 1 last year.

Employment in the Pacific Coast States on February 1 totaled 463,000 persons, including 289,000 family workers and 174,000 hired workers. Little field work was being done in Washington or Oregon, except for pruning operations, but in California the harvest of lettuce, carrots, celery, citrus and cotton, and the pruning of orchards and vineyards were important jobs. California shipped more than 1,900 cars of vegetables and about 1,100 cars of citrus in the week ended February 2. In the comparable week a year ago about 2,250 cars of vegetables and 1,450 cars of citrus were shipped.

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Farm labor: Persons employed, indexes and related data, February 1, 1946,
with comparisons

	: Annual : average: : 1910-14:	: Jan. : 1, : 1945:	: Feb. : 1, : 1945:	: Jan. : 1, : 1946:	: Feb. : 1, : 1946:
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES:					
Total:					
Unadjusted	100	66	67	64	65
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	85	83	81	80
Family labor -					
Unadjusted	100	72	72	70	70
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	86	84	83	81
Hired labor -					
Unadjusted	100	50	52	46	49
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	79	78	73	73
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons):					
Total	12,052	8,005	8,051	7,732	7,799
Family labor	9,160	6,571	6,557	6,412	6,375
Hired labor	2,892	1,434	1,494	1,320	1,424
RELATED INDEXES:					
Prices received by farmers <u>1/</u>	100	200	200	206	<u>2/</u> 206
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	100	62	---	59	---
Average weekly factory earnings <u>3/</u> :	100	430	429	---	---

1/ Average of the 15th of the given and the 15th of the previous month.

2/ January 15, 1946 -- latest data available.

3/ Factory payroll per employed worker; average of all weeks during the designated month.

Based on reports from 20,210 farmers.

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Farm employment: Persons employed, United States and geographic divisions,
February 1, 1946, with comparisons

TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT¹

Geographic division	February	January 1,	February 1,	January 1,	February 1,
	average 1935-39	1945	1945	1946	1946
	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's
United States	9,019	8,005	8,051	7,732	7,799
New England	222	200	203	202	203
Middle Atlantic	538	491	486	488	482
East North Central	1,327	1,201	1,178	1,188	1,170
West North Central	1,439	1,368	1,345	1,279	1,297
South Atlantic	1,697	1,435	1,430	1,410	1,417
East South Central	1,449	1,228	1,248	1,177	1,166
West South Central	1,523	1,282	1,348	1,207	1,275
Mountain	372	345	347	324	326
Pacific	452	455	466	457	463

FAMILY WORKERS¹/₂

United States	7,191	6,571	6,557	6,412	6,375
New England	151	150	155	150	154
Middle Atlantic	388	367	364	366	358
East North Central	1,084	1,041	1,005	1,028	1,002
West North Central	1,232	1,204	1,184	1,146	1,142
South Atlantic	1,295	1,133	1,115	1,151	1,114
East South Central	1,244	1,069	1,105	1,044	1,022
West South Central	1,233	1,065	1,071	996	1,039
Mountain	276	261	271	250	255
Pacific	288	281	287	281	289

HIRED WORKERS

United States	1,828	1,434	1,494	1,320	1,424
New England	71	50	48	52	49
Middle Atlantic	150	124	122	122	124
East North Central	243	160	173	160	168
West North Central	207	164	161	133	155
South Atlantic	402	302	315	259	303
East South Central	205	159	143	133	144
West South Central	230	217	277	211	236
Mountain	96	84	76	74	71
Pacific	164	174	179	176	174

¹/₂ Including farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

Based on reports from 20,210 farmers who reported for their own farms the number of family and hired workers doing 2 or more days of work during the week of inquiry.

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Farm employment: Total, family and hired workers, United States,
specified annual averages and by months, Jan. 1945 - Feb. 1946 1/

Year and month	Total farm employment 1,000's	Family workers <u>2/</u> 1,000's	Hired workers 1,000's
1910-14 av.	12,052	9,160	2,892
1935-39 av.	10,920	8,353	2,567
1939 av.	10,740	8,145	2,595
1940 av.	10,585	8,019	2,566
1941 av.	10,361	7,829	2,532
1942 av.	10,397	7,855	2,542
<u>1943 av.</u>	<u>10,263</u>	<u>7,857</u>	<u>2,406</u>
1944 av.	10,037	7,810	2,227
January 1	8,202	6,622	1,580
February 1	8,383	6,702	1,681
March 1	8,562	6,935	1,627
April 1	9,080	7,401	1,679
May 1	10,068	8,079	1,989
June 1	11,285	8,845	2,440
July 1	11,355	8,623	2,732
August 1	10,608	7,914	2,694
September 1	11,040	8,223	2,817
October 1	11,839	8,928	2,911
November 1	10,690	8,168	2,522
<u>December 1</u>	<u>9,537</u>	<u>7,289</u>	<u>2,048</u>
1945 av.	9,843	7,726	2,117
January 1	8,005	6,571	1,434
February 1	8,051	6,557	1,494
March 1	8,414	6,894	1,520
April 1	8,982	7,322	1,660
May 1	10,017	8,153	1,864
June 1	10,994	8,637	2,357
July 1	11,100	8,556	2,544
August 1	10,612	7,970	2,642
September 1	10,907	8,094	2,813
October 1	11,052	8,558	2,494
November 1	10,747	8,178	2,569
<u>December 1</u>	<u>9,245</u>	<u>7,217</u>	<u>2,028</u>
1946 av.	-	-	-
January 1	7,732	6,412	1,320
February 1	7,799	6,375	1,424

1/ Annual averages are straight averages of first of month employment estimates.

2/ Includes farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

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Farm employment: Persons employed by type of farming area and
index numbers, January 1945 to date 2/ - Continued

Year:	Range Area						Northwestern Area					
	Family		Hired		Total		Family		Hired		Total	
and:	:		:		:		:		:		:	
month:	:		:		:		:		:		:	
	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000	000
1945 :	186	90	276	123	89	109:	205	98	303	129	126	128
Jan.:	168	63	231	111	62	92:	186	40	226	117	51	95
Feb.:	172	57	225	114	52	89:	197	79	236	124	50	100
Mar.:	179	72	251	118	71	99:	198	37	235	125	47	99
Apr.:	182	69	251	120	68	99:	204	46	250	128	59	105
May :	188	76	264	124	75	105:	216	57	273	136	73	115
June:	200	114	314	132	113	124:	220	81	301	138	104	127
July:	169	107	276	112	106	109:	206	157	363	130	201	153
Aug.:	204	116	320	135	115	127:	214	197	411	135	253	173
Sept.:	203	135	338	134	133	134:	231	203	434	145	260	183
Oct.:	191	100	291	126	99	115:	201	126	327	126	162	138
Nov.:	193	106	299	128	105	118:	199	128	327	125	164	138
Dec.:	182	66	248	120	65	98:	192	69	261	121	88	110
1946 :						:						
Jan.:	161	55	216	106	54	86:	182	41	223	114	53	94
Feb.:	163	50	213	108	49	84:	197	37	234	124	47	99

1/ Corn Area: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa; Eastern Dairy Area; New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania; Western Dairy Area; Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota; Middle Eastern Area: Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee; Eastern Cotton Area: South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama; Delta Cotton Area: Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana; Western Cotton Area: Oklahoma and Texas; Small Grains Area: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Montana; Range Area: Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Nevada; Northwestern Area: Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

2/ Includes farm operators and members of their families doing farm work without wages.

3/ 1910-14 = 100.

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Farm wage rates: Annual average wage rates and index numbers, United States, 1909-45

Year	Per month		Per day		Weighted average rate per month	Index numbers of farm wage rates (1910-14 = 100)
	With board Dollars	Without board Dollars	With board Dollars	Without board Dollars		
1909	22.21	28.10	1.09	1.30	23.77	96
1910	21.22	28.08	1.12	1.39	23.93	97
1911	21.49	28.54	1.13	1.39	24.15	98
1912	22.23	29.34	1.18	1.43	24.98	101
1913	22.89	30.21	1.20	1.46	25.59	103
1914	22.62	29.74	1.17	1.43	25.13	101
1915	22.97	30.06	1.18	1.44	25.41	103
1916	25.17	32.84	1.31	1.58	27.93	113
1917	31.11	40.52	1.65	1.98	34.79	141
1918	37.96	48.80	2.15	2.54	43.73	177
1919	43.29	56.63	2.54	3.03	51.13	207
1920	51.73	65.40	2.98	3.46	59.88	242
1921	33.62	44.67	1.77	2.12	38.29	155
1922	32.75	43.33	1.73	2.07	37.47	151
1923	37.24	48.25	1.89	2.25	41.87	169
1924	37.92	49.32	1.94	2.29	42.91	173
1925	38.77	49.90	1.97	2.29	43.51	176
1926	39.87	50.83	1.98	2.31	44.36	179
1927	40.11	50.85	1.98	2.28	44.36	179
1928	40.11	50.72	1.98	2.27	44.28	179
1929	40.61	51.22	1.96	2.25	44.52	180
1930	37.59	48.10	1.76	2.08	41.25	167
1931	28.77	38.38	1.32	1.62	32.11	130
1932	20.85	28.88	.94	1.20	23.66	96
1933	18.07	25.67	.85	1.11	21.10	85
1934	20.24	28.19	.98	1.26	23.61	95
1935	22.42	30.24	1.07	1.33	25.53	103
1936	24.53	32.28	1.15	1.42	27.51	111
1937	28.00	36.32	1.33	1.61	31.25	126
1938	27.73	36.18	1.31	1.58	30.91	125
1939	27.39	35.82	1.30	1.56	30.56	123
1940	28.05	36.68	1.36	1.59	31.28	126
1941	34.85	43.64	1.69	1.93	38.14	154
1942	46.64	55.91	2.19	2.49	49.80	201
1943	61.91	72.51	2.87	3.27	65.35	264
1944	74.00	85.70	3.46	3.93	78.00	315
1945	82.30	95.40	3.80	4.34	86.60	350

Farm labor program: Foreign workers employed in agriculture,
February 1, 1946 1/

State	Mexicans	Jamaicans	Bahamians	British Hondurans	Newfound- landers	Total
Maine		6				6
N.H.		5			50	55
Vt.					125	2/ 142
Mass.		19			56	75
R.I.					12	12
Conn.		717			75	792
N.Y.		145	5		249	399
N.J.		117			65	182
Pa.		13			71	84
Ohio		63				63
Ind.		40				40
Ill.		2	5			7
Mich.	7	109				116
Wis.	20	2	3			25
Minn.			1			1
Iowa						--
Mo.		20				20
N.Dak.						--
S.Dak.	10					10
Nebr.	243					243
Kans.	4	9				13
Del.		80	39		9	128
Md.		97	51		13	161
Va.		40				40
W.Va.						--
N.C.						--
S.C.						--
Ga.						--
Fla.		3,401	2,722	132		6,255
Ky.						--
Tenn.						--
Ala.						--
Miss.						--
Ark.						--
La.						--
Okla.						--
Tex.						--
Mont.	10					10
Idaho	28					28
Wyo.	1					1
Colo.	79					79
N.Mex.						--
Ariz.	1,628					1,628
Utah	45					45
Nev.	123					123
Wash.	177					177
Oreg.	183					183
Calif.	17,239					17,239
Total	19,797	4,885	2,826	132	725	2/ 28,382

1/ As of February 1946. Data provided by Requirements and Certifications Section, Program Division, Labor Branch, P.M.A. 2/ Includes 17 Canadians in Vermont.

Farm labor program: Farm labor placements 1/

State	December		January 1 to December 31 <u>2/</u>	
	1944	1945	1944	1945
Maine	0	7	20,878	23,766
N. H.	35	15	5,577	7,241
Vt.	5	14	5,330	2,652
Mass.	42	5	9,959	9,952
R. I.	0	0	610	728
Conn.	107	302	27,001	24,558
N. Y.	1,180	2,383	223,573	245,563
N. J.	9,339	1,815	64,215	129,412
Pa.	3,851	148	75,031	67,625
Ohio	340	1,043	73,150	68,051
Ind.	1,574	79	39,999	51,677
Ill.	299	326	68,277	61,786
Mich.	8	10,428	136,783	211,916
Wis.	267	741	32,379	54,365
Minn.	158	133	56,963	74,462
Iowa	335	2,287	53,818	94,792
Mo.	273	730	12,668	24,662
N. Dak.	208	984	75,633	147,883
S. Dak.	148	157	36,527	59,293
Nebr.	567	878	32,825	98,919
Kans.	29	19	23,081	15,490
Dcl.	1,153	187	33,411	20,373
Md.	8,960	5,490	160,455	175,119
Va.	2,439	3,487	84,048	112,014
W. Va.	23	20	2,324	1,311
N. C.	1,736	4,451	147,219	254,963
S. C.	2,528	3,733	97,336	100,037
Ga.	8,925	7,074	167,266	165,159
Fla.	1,750	3,256	67,104	41,655
Ky.	270	1,338	69,819	155,235
Tenn.	2,841	8,916	68,361	154,330
Ala.	1,279	1,063	75,027	150,968
Miss.	20,597	24,766	177,376	234,499
Ark.	67,565	8,768	491,825	303,318
La.	6,100	13,272	87,320	139,355
Okla.	14,307	4,760	217,779	186,983
Tex.	31,095	17,898	565,309	531,108
Mont.	38	115	19,059	113,953
Idaho	639	194	196,765	323,801
Wyo.	79	383	13,608	65,076
Colo.	1,565	7,864	75,315	162,671
N. Mex.	9,853	7,489	77,145	64,475
Ariz.	12,844	25,822	53,871	99,505
Utah	378	1,462	80,661	154,909
Nev.	62	69	5,707	4,785
Wash.	909	1,155	296,998	299,854
Oreg.	1,002	551	187,237	176,915
Calif.	32,623	27,749	622,464	715,564
Total	250,385	203,786	5,212,082	6,384,179

1/ Data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.

2/ Preliminary - To be adjusted to data in annual reports.

Farm labor program: Placements of World War II veterans on farms,
United States, by months, January - December 1945 1/

Month	As hired hands		As tenants or sharecroppers		All placements	
	During month	Cumulative total	During month	Cumulative total	During month	Cumulative total
January	513	513	80	80	593	593
February	730	1,243	116	196	846	1,439
March	910	2,153	167	363	1,077	2,516
April	1,149	3,302	140	503	1,289	3,805
May	1,229	4,531	85	588	1,314	5,119
June	1,718	6,249	76	664	1,794	6,913
July	3,024	9,273	86	750	3,110	10,023
August	3,791	13,064	140	890	3,931	13,954
September	3,873	16,937	196	1,086	4,069	18,023
October	5,529	22,466	378	1,464	5,907	23,930
November	4,892	27,358	663	2,127	5,555	29,485
December	4,378	31,736	505	2,632	4,883	34,368

1/ Revised- data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.

Farm Labor Program: Placements of World War II veterans on farms by
geographic divisions, December 1945 and January-December 1945 1/

Area	As hired hands		As tenants or sharecroppers		All placements	
	During January-December	January-December	During January-December	January-December	During January-December	January-December
New England	45	323	0	8	45	331
Middle Atlantic	28	487	0	34	28	521
East North Central	101	925	27	152	128	1,077
West North Central	424	3,606	31	176	455	3,782
South Atlantic	65	1,290	30	283	95	1,573
East South Central	424	1,821	294	1,081	718	2,902
West South Central	434	4,614	86	563	520	5,177
Mountain	419	2,658	27	256	446	2,914
Pacific	2,438	16,012	10	79	2,448	16,091
United States	4,378	31,736	505	2,632	4,883	34,368

1/ Data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.